

REMARKS

This response is submitted to the Office Action mailed July 15, 2004 in the above-identified patent application.

Claims 1-13 are pending in the application. The Examiner has indicated that claims 3-10 and 13 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested for claims 1, 2, 11 and 12.

Claims 1, 2, 11 and 12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vasanabala U.S. Patent No. 6,307, 368 in view of Bangerter et al. "General Framework for the SNR Analysis of Multiple Acquisition SSFP" ISMRM, 10-16 July 2003, p. 976.

This rejection is respectfully traversed. The cited Bangerter et al. paper was co-authored by Neal K. Bangerter and Dwight G. Nishimura, applicants in the present patent application, along with Brian A. Hargreaves.

Enclosed are Declarations from Drs. Nishimura and Hargreaves in which Dr. Nishimura expressly and unequivocally states that the description of the invention in the cited paper is attributed solely to him and Neal Bangerter. The Declaration is further supported by the Declaration of Dr. Hargreaves that the description in the paper of artifact reduction in SSFP using weighted sum of combined signals is attributed solely to Neal K. Bangerter and Dwight G. Nishimura.

Accordingly, the cited paper is no longer applicable as prior art. See MPEP 716.10.

Since the rejection of claims 1, 2, 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) on Vasanabala et al. taken with the Bangerter et al paper is overcome, and since the Examiner has indicated that claims 3-10 and 13 are allowable, all as above set forth, it is requested that claims 1-13 be allowed and this case advance to issue.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments concerning the present response, the undersigned attorney requests the opportunity of discussing the response with the Examiner. A telephone call to the undersigned attorney is requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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